WG notes 4/19/73

What really happened at Ziegler's meeting with the press yesterday has not been reported in anything I've seen or heard. That may be true of Dean's unusually-presented today's statement, reported on one newscast I heard (WTOP radio before 1 p.m.)

Ziegler refused to answer any more questions about WG after saying what he wanted to say. The way he put it was uncool for that cucumber: if you ask one more question I'll walk out. There was an immediate and strong reaction in which he was told he was not to decide what questions the press would and would not ask and he had no right to change ground rules unilaterally in the middle of the game. He then got really pummelled. Ian McDonald told me of this. It was pretty arrogant, even for Ziegler. Rough time or not, however, he added nothing.

Dean's statement today was not released by Ziegler or anyone in his office. It is one he appears to have prepared. It was read by his secretary to those who phoned to make inquiry about today's stories. He says like Martha about her attitude toward her John, he is not going to be a scapegoat, he's not made that way, and our system of justice works the way it does so nobody has to be a goat.

Ziegler, when asked, made snide cracks about Dean, according to WTOP radio after 2 p.m. Was he still working? He's in his office now.

Dean did <u>not</u> in this statement plead innocent. What he did say is that he is not going to take the heat for anyone else. It would seem that he could not have Mitchell in mind, for Mitchell has been named.

Translated into plainer English, I think it forecasts a Nuremburg defense.

Translated into politics, I think it means I'm not going to the gallows alone.

However it is intepreted, I think it may well be the truly exceptional, a strong if probably ineffectual warning to Nixon, that if he is charged, he will tell all.

He is counsel to the President, not to Haldeman. He also attended the FBI interrogations, from the published accounts, not as counsel for those questioned but for the WH.

Aside from this one WTOP radio account, none of those I've heard indicates in any way that this is a threat. WTOP inferred it only. I heard the 12:55 p.m. NBC midday news, the 1:00 30 minutes of WTOP-TV news and the 2 p.m. CBS net radio news.

All of these things make me believe there may now be unanticipated new developments, perhaps new characters surfacing, probably in self-interest.

Later: 3 p.m. CBS net radio had the voice of DC Lawyer Peter Wolf petitioning Sirica for protection against contempt threat of US Attorney for Wolf's refusal to name his client. Client removed 8 boxes WG, Hunt, campaign records from WH right after arrests. There are a number of Wolf law firms in DC but only one listed as Peter. He is in a section near local criminal courts where the lawyers are not generally those of best reputation. Knowing no more, I wonder if this was a low-level employee who was used, one who either had an earlier association with Wolf of could afford none better. I do not, however, assume that a lawyer located in this poor-lawyer section has to be a poor lawyer. Some of those experienced fellows are pretty sharp, coming from long experience, and are often well known to the courts. They spend more time in the courts than lawyers from the prestigeous firms. Dean's lawyer in this matter is Hogan, Washington Bldg.

4/20, night. Mitchell on NBC and CBS evening TV news was a fascinating study. His face appeared as never before. He is a scared man. What interested me most is that, like Martha and Dean but ever so much more subtly he put out a threat, too. With all the insane things that have happened, one can't apply rational standards. However, I have trouble believing that a man with a lifetime of legal crookedness behind him would entrust himself to the Liddys when such risky criminality was involved. It is not that I think he'd not be part on principle. It is that I can't believe he could be that careless and foolish. ... Ian's sources say 10-15 will be leaving the White House and the conservative GOPS on the Hill are talking about impeachment.